

To: Ms. Tracie Billington, Department of Water Resources
Ms. Shahla Farahnak, State Water Resources Control Board
Fr: Jimmy Smith, Chairman & Jake Mackenzie, Vice-Chairman
Policy Review Panel, North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
Da: February 7, 2007

SUBJECT: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS – IRWM STEP 2

Dear Ms. Billington and Ms. Farahnak,

We are writing on behalf of the Policy Review Panel for the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (NCIRWMP) regarding your preliminary concepts for Step 2 funding awards outlined at the January 23, 2007 IRWM Scoping Workshop in Sacramento. We support your proposal to provide additional funds to qualified regions. We understand the substantial resource allocation required to participate in the IRWM program, and support the concept of distributing funding now to avoid further project cost inflation. We also support the accelerated distribution of funding to Southern California, in order to balance the distribution of funds between north and south.

However, we have one additional recommendation. We believe that the State evaluation process was rigorous and fair, and that the established scoring criteria should be retained. In your effort to allocate the remaining funds during the Step 2 process, we respectfully request that – after implementing your proposed distribution approach - you distribute any remaining northern California funds based on your established scoring criteria, such that remaining awards would be made relative to score. Our proposed approach would allow the State to remedy some of the challenges associated with the reduction from \$50 million to \$25 million, and would respect the evaluation process that you and your staff so carefully crafted and communicated with months of public input. As you know, the North Coast has a sound and well-established process in place – led by our Policy Review Panel – for equitable distribution of additional funds, should they be made available.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of our request. We have greatly appreciated all of your support and assistance during the last two years, as well as your sincere incorporation of input from the regions. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this further, please contact either of us, or our staff person Karen Gaffney (contact information below). Thank you.

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